

Date: Aug. 14, 2017
Subject: Caltrain parking increase and options for Stanford commuters

Dear Stanford Caltrain commuter,

As you may be aware, Caltrain's Board of Directors recently approved an increase in Caltrain parking prices and fares. Effective Oct. 1, the price of a monthly Caltrain parking permit will increase from \$55 to \$82.50. The new parking rate applies to parking permits purchased on or after Sept. 21, 2017.

Provided below are answers to questions some of you might be asking.

Will Stanford subsidize Caltrain parking?

We have received questions from commuters asking Stanford to subsidize the cost of Caltrain parking in light of the increase. Although our office continually evaluates commute programs and incentives, there are no plans to increase Clean Air Cash or subsidize parking at this time.

Will Stanford continue to purchase the Caltrain Go Pass?

In addition to increasing parking fees, Caltrain is increasing the cost of the Go Pass, which Stanford University and Stanford Health Care purchase for eligible commuters. Effective January 1, 2018, the Go Pass increases from \$190 to \$237.50 per eligible commuter. Effective January 1, 2019, the Go Pass increases to \$285 per eligible commuter.

Stanford remains committed to supporting Stanford commuters who ride Caltrain to commute. Purchasing the Go Pass is a significant investment for Stanford, because we must purchase passes for all eligible commuters, not just those who use the pass. As the largest purchaser of Go Passes, Stanford purchases tens of thousands of passes each year. At this time, Stanford plans to continue to purchase passes for all eligible commuters despite the substantial increase in cost.

With the increase in Caltrain parking, wouldn't it be cheaper for me to park at Stanford?

As you do a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether Caltrain will still work for you, you may want to factor in these points for consideration:

- **Parking Costs.** The current \$300 in Clear Air Cash (\$25 per month) reduces the cost of Caltrain parking to be \$57.50 per month, which is higher than a 'C' permit (\$33 per month) and lower than an 'A' permit (\$93 per month).
- **Additional Costs.** When comparing permit costs, it is a more complete picture to compare all costs associated with the option.
 - **Consider the full cost of driving alone.** For eligible commuters, riding Caltrain is free, thanks to Stanford's purchase of the Go Pass. Whereas the cost of driving alone often includes vehicle expenses, such as gas, maintenance and insurance. In addition, with continued and growing concern about carbon emissions, the choice between Caltrain and driving alone makes a difference in a commuter's carbon footprint. Calculate your

own costs and emission savings using the [Commute Cost and Carbon Emissions Calculator](#).

- **Health.** Many commuters let us know that commuting by train and transit is much less stressful than being stuck in bumper-to-bumper Bay Area traffic. In addition, almost all sustainable modes increase fitness by incorporating more exercise in your day than driving alone.
- **Other options.**
 - **Walk, bike, or take transit to Caltrain.** Consider, walking, biking, or taking transit to Caltrain if possible. We can help you identify your first-mile commute options to get to Caltrain with our [trip planning service](#).
 - **Carpool options.** You may also want to consider carpooling—either to the Caltrain station or to Stanford. We recently introduced a [free carpool permit program](#). If you are Commute-Club-eligible, you can get a free ‘C’-Carpool permit with a two-person carpool, or a free ‘A’-Carpool permit with a carpool of three or more.

To find others to carpool, the [Scoop carpooling app](#) can match you with commuters in the Bay Area looking to share the ride. Scoop is offering **\$5 in free commuting** when you sign up for the [Scoop carpooling app](#) and use the code **STANFORDU05**.

If you prefer a Stanford-only ridematching option, visit our [Stanford Carpool and Vanpool Listings](#) page to view those looking to start or expand a carpool. You are welcome to post the home-to-Caltrain portion of your commute on our carpool listings page.

Caltrain Parking Cancellation Deadline

If you are paying for your Caltrain parking permit through our [pre-tax payroll deduction program](#), and you decide to cancel your Caltrain parking for Oct. 1, please note that you will need to submit the [pre-tax payroll deduction cancellation form](#) to our office **no later than Sept. 9**.

Why is Caltrain increasing fees and fares?

Caltrain explains that unlike most transit systems, Caltrain does not currently receive dedicated funding to support its operations. The cost of operating and maintaining the service has increased due to the challenge of accommodating record-setting ridership demand and maintaining an aging diesel system.

Most would agree that Caltrain offers a valuable service to riders and the region. Funding must keep pace with operation and maintenance of the system, and fees and fares are the primary source (66 percent of Caltrain’s operating costs) for meeting these needs.

Even with the approved fare and fee increase, Caltrain notes that they will need to use over \$8 million in reserves to maintain operations in Fiscal Year 2018 and they are projected to use another \$7 million in Fiscal Year 2019. The increase in fares and fees appear to be a necessary part of Caltrain’s effort to continue to provide the service.

We hope this information is helpful. Please let us know if we can be assistance in identifying your commute options or answering your questions or concerns.

Thank you for choosing a Caltrain commute. We hope you will decide to continue!

Best regards,

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